

- Report Shows Local Impact of House Health Reform Proposal- Washington, DC –

Today U.S. Rep. John Hall (D-Dover Plains) released a report outlining the specific impact on New York's 19th Congressional District of the current draft of the House of Representative's Health Care Reform proposal: America's Affordable Health Choices Act.

"This report shows clearly that small businesses and the middle class will significantly benefit from the health care reform legislation that Congress is working on," said Congressman Hall. "The details of the final bill are still being worked out, but this analysis shows that Congress is moving in the right direction on health care reform. This reform will provide middle class families with stable coverage that can't be taken away, stable and lower health care costs overall, and constant quality care. The cost of doing nothing is too high."

- Help for small businesses. Under the legislation, small businesses with 25 employees or less and average wages of less than \$40,000 qualify for tax credits of up to 50% of the costs of providing health insurance. There are up to 18,700 small businesses in the district that could qualify for these credits.

- Help for seniors with drug costs in the Part D donut hole. Each year, 6,400 seniors in the district hit the donut hole and are forced to pay their full drug costs, despite having Part D drug coverage. The legislation would provide them with immediate relief, cutting brand name drug costs in the donut hole by 50%, and ultimately eliminate the donut hole.

- Health care and financial security. There were 790 health care-related bankruptcies in the district in 2008, caused primarily by the health care costs not covered by insurance. The bill provides health insurance for almost every American and caps annual out-of-pocket costs at \$10,000 per year, ensuring that no citizen will have to face financial ruin because of high health care costs.

- Relieving the burden of uncompensated care for hospitals and health care providers. In 2008, health care providers in the district provided \$47 million worth of uncompensated care, care that was provided to individuals who lacked insurance coverage and were unable to pay their bills. Under the legislation, these costs of uncompensated care would be virtually eliminated. "Currently, the costs of the uninsured's care are passed on to those who have health insurance, increasing the average family's yearly premium by \$1,100 and driving health care costs higher and higher," said Congressman Hall.

- Coverage of the uninsured. There are 57,000 uninsured individuals in the district, 8% of the district. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that nationwide, 97% of all Americans will have insurance coverage when the bill takes effect. If this benchmark is reached in the district, 36,000 Americans who currently do not have health insurance will receive coverage.

- No deficit spending. The cost of health care reform under the legislation is fully paid for: half through making the Medicare and Medicaid program more efficient and half through a small surtax on the income in excess of \$1,000,000 of the wealthiest Americans.